

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A closure mechanism for a beverage preparation machine comprising a lower part and an upper part, the upper part and lower part being movable relative to one another from an open position in which a beverage cartridge can be received in the closure mechanism and a closed position in which the beverage cartridge is fixedly retained between the upper part and lower part, wherein in the closed position the closure mechanism contacts a top surface and a bottom surface of the beverage cartridge at or near a center of the beverage cartridge to exert a compressive force of greater than 50N.

2. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 1 wherein the closure mechanism exerts a compressive force of greater than 130N.

3. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 1 wherein the closure mechanism exerts a compressive force of approximately 200N.

4. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 1 wherein the closure mechanism contacts an uppermost surface of the beverage cartridge.

5. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 4 wherein the closure mechanism in addition contacts a peripheral flange of the beverage cartridge.

6. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 5 further comprising a resilient member which contacts at least a part of the top surface of the beverage cartridge.

7. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 6 wherein the resilient member is a sprung member.

8. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 7 wherein the sprung member is a viewing window.

9. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 8 wherein the lower part comprises a raised portion which contacts a central portion of the bottom surface of the beverage cartridge.

10. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 9 wherein the lower part is fixed and the upper part is rotatable relative to the lower part from the open position to the closed position.

11. (Original) A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 8 further comprising a cartridge mount interposed between the lower part and the upper part and being rotatable relative to the lower part and the upper part for receiving, in use, the beverage cartridge.

12. (New) A closure mechanism for a beverage preparation machine comprising a lower part, an upper part, and a resilient member, the upper part and lower part being movable relative to one another from an open position in which a beverage cartridge can be received in the closure mechanism and a closed position in which the beverage cartridge is fixedly retained between the upper part and lower part, wherein in the closed position the closure mechanism contacts a top surface and a bottom surface of the beverage cartridge at or near a center of the beverage cartridge to exert a compressive force of greater than 50N, wherein the resilient member contacts at least a part of the top surface of the beverage cartridge, and wherein the resilient member is a viewing window.

13. (New) The closure mechanism of claim 12 wherein the lower part comprises a raised portion which contacts a central portion of the bottom surface of the beverage cartridge.

14. (New) The closure mechanism of claim 13 wherein the lower part is fixed and the upper part is rotatable relative to the lower part from the open position to the closed position.

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AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE dated March 23, 2006

Reply to Office Action of February 21, 2006

15. (New) The closure mechanism of claim 12 further comprising a cartridge mount interposed between the lower part and the upper part and being rotatable relative to the lower part and the upper part for receiving, in use, the beverage cartridge.